

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2207

ANSWERED ON:14.03.2007

BANGLADESHI VESSELS PLYING ON SEA ROUTE

Madhwaraj Smt. Manorama

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the number of Bangladeshi vessels plying the inland water transit and trade route between India and Bangladesh outnumber Indian vessels plying on the route;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether according to Indo-Bangladesh protocol on inland transit and trade, the share in movement of cargo is to be on 50:50 basis;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) to (e): At present, against 95 Bangladeshi vessels, 10 Indian vessels are under operation on Kolkata-Haldia – Narayanganj sector of inland water transit and trade route between India and Bangladesh. However, on Kolkata-Haldia-Pandu and Kolkata – Haldia - Karimganj routes, mostly Indian vessels are plying. Reasons for Bangladeshi vessels outnumbering Indian vessels on Kolkata- Haldia – Narayanganj sector are that the operation of Bangladeshi vessels is more economical in the tidal zone as they have lower cost of construction, less cost of manning and the bunker used by them is also cheaper.

Article 18 of the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade provide for sharing of the carriage of inter-country trade and transit cargo on equal tonnage basis (i.e. 50:50). Cargo transportation on Protocol route has increased substantially in last three years, which is helping trade between the two countries. Since Bangladeshi vessels are cheaper, Indian vessels are not able to compete. However, the matter was taken up with Bangladesh side during the last Standing Committee (constituted under Article 26 of Indo-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade) held on 27th – 28th September, 2006 at New Delhi in which both sides agreed to work towards reducing the imbalance.